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Letter dated 26 March 2008 from the Secretary-General to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), I have the honour to convey the attached report on the international security presence in Kosovo covering the period from 1 to 31 January 2008 (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would bring it to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **Ban** Ki-moon

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Annex

Monthly report to the United Nations on the operations of the Kosovo Force

1. This report covers the period from 1 to 31 January 2008.

2. As at 31 January 2008, the total number of troops in theatre was 15,875. This includes 2,370 troops from non-NATO countries.

Political situation

3. A new Government, led by Prime Minister Hashim Thaci, was formed in Kosovo on 9 January 2008. On the same day, Fatmir Sejdiu was re-elected President of Kosovo for a five-year term. In his inaugural speech to the Assembly, the new Prime Minister appealed to the Serbian minority to consider Kosovo their home. In line with this, three Ministers from minorities, including two Kosovo Serbs, were appointed to form part of the Government.

4. The Government of Serbia adopted an "action plan" on 14 January 2008 to protect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and constitutional order of Serbia in case of Kosovo independence.

5. The Security Council held consultations on Kosovo on 16 January 2008.

Security situation

6. On 2 January, the Kosovo force (KFOR) reported an explosion at a Serbian commercial bank in Dragas (Multinational Task Force South). Considerable material damage was reported but no injuries. The area was secured by the Kosovo Police Service (KPS) and a KFOR explosive ordnance disposal team was dispatched to the scene to support them. KPS is investigating the incident.

7. On 14 January, KFOR reported that a hand grenade hidden under a car exploded in Suva Reka (Multinational Task Force South). Of the five Kosovo-Albanians in the car, four were injured, two seriously. KPS is investigating the incident.

8. On 20 January, KFOR reported that two devices exploded in a house in Pristina (Multinational Task Force Centre). Five people were slightly injured. KPS is investigating the incident, although initial reports indicate the cause was probably a disagreement between two Kosovo Albanian families. One suspect has been arrested so far.

9. On 21 January, KFOR reported that two KPS officers and one Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) member were arrested by KPS in relation to an explosion that occurred last September in Pristina (Multinational Task Force Centre), leaving two people dead and 11 injured and four shops destroyed. Further investigations are ongoing.

10. During January 2008, no incidents against KFOR were recorded. The threat level against KFOR remains low.

11. A total of 487 incidents related to drugs (13), counterfeit currency (60), smuggling (36), explosions (6), miscellaneous criminal incidents (215), illegal weapons possession (83), weapons and ammunition seizures (36) and unexploded

ordnance (38) were reported during this period. The number of incidents is comparable to that of December 2007 (484).

KFOR operations

12. The situation in Kosovo remained stable but tense throughout January 2008. Multinational Task Forces continued conducting their tactical reinforcement and framework operations throughout Kosovo to increase the visibility of KFOR and to enhance the units' mutual knowledge and interoperability. On 22 January, in Multinational Task Force Centre, the multinational specialized unit, UNMIK police and KPS conducted a joint exercise to test crowd- and riot-control procedures. Such exercises will be conducted twice a month.

13. A KFOR tactical reserve team made a reconnaissance of the ground lines of communication from Kosovo to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to test the implementing agreement between NATO and Montenegro signed in November 2007. From 22 to 26 January, the British Operational Reserve Force Battalion conducted a level-1 operational rehearsal in the KFOR and EUFOR area of operations.

Compliance

14. During the month of January, there was one session of the Disciplinary Board which resulted in the dismissal of three KPC members. Two of these members are from minority communities.

Kosovo Protection Corps

15. There was no recruitment campaign in January 2008.

16. The current active personnel establishment is 2,898. The total number of active ethnic minority members remains the same as last month at 190 (166 male, 24 female). There are still 113 open posts left in the active personnel establishment list. The reserve list includes 2,000 positions with 1,892 filled (including 48 ethnic minority members, which equates to 2.45 per cent).

17. Training of the KPC members continues according to plan. Communication seminars are now being conducted KPC-wide. The project and budget management programme was conducted successfully from 14 to 18 January in Ferizai. Multinational Task Force South completed a winter search and rescue programme for the Search and Rescue Unit of the Civil Protection Brigade, the Training and Doctrine Unit and the KPC Military Academy. A total of 13 members of the Civil Protection Brigade and 16 members of the Training and Doctrine Unit participated in the training. KPC institutional training is proceeding according to plan with many different courses, including:

(a) Officer career course (16 Majors).

(b) Staff and command course (10 Lieutenant Colonels).

(c) English language training via the Cambridge Language Institution (150 participants).

(d) Instructor course (15 participants).

(e) Driver licence training (30 participants).

(f) Computer training (15 participants).

(g) English language training at various levels (15 participants).

(h) Weapons safety handling (20 participants).

18. As a result of many joint KFOR-KPC visits, training and seminars, the Commander of KFOR observed a significant improvement in the performance of KPC internal communication since September 2007.

19. During the month of January 2008, there were 15 ceremonies involving 288 KPC members. No incidents were reported.

Conclusion

20. The security situation remained calm and stable despite rising expectations about an imminent status decision. Planning for the post-settlement period continues. KFOR remains fully prepared to deal with unrest and would respond adequately to any attempts to disrupt the safe and secure environment, regardless of where they come from.